PITTA

Newsletter of Deccan Birders (formerly Birdwatchers' Society of Andhra Pradesh)
New Series Volume 23 Number 2 February 2026

FIELD TRIP: Sunday, February 01, 2026, 7.30AM: Rudrur Lake (Pedda Cheruvu), Nizamabad Dt. Meeting Point(s): Taj Dhaba, Muthangi, 04:00AM. Coordinator(s): Gowthama Poludasu (Mobile: 94409-10967)

Rudrur is a village tank (freshwater lake) located in Rudrur Mandal of Nizamabad District, Telangana, set within a predominantly rural and agricultural landscape. The habitat of Rudrur Lake is a mosaic of open shallow water, marshy edges, and vegetated margins. Exposed mudflats and damp shorelines become important feeding grounds for small shorebirds like waders and stints. Surrounding farmlands, scrub patches, and uncultivated fields further enhance the habitat by providing additional foraging areas and safe roosting sites, particularly for ducks, geese, and passerines. Although Rudrur Lake is not formally designated as a bird sanctuary, it is locally recognised by birdwatchers as an important wintering and stopover site. The lake attracts a diverse assemblage of waterfowl and wetland birds, especially during the winter migration period, when migratory species arrive from Eurasian and Central Asian flyways. Notable species to watch for include Greylag Goose, Comb Duck, Little Stint, Eurasian Teal, Northern Pintail, Northern Shoveler, Eurasian Wigeon, and Lesser Whistling Duck, among others. The seasonal nature of the lake, coupled with its strategic location among regional wetlands, supports high avian diversity and makes Rudrur a rewarding site for winter birding in inland Telangana.

This will be a half-day trip, and we plan to start our return journey to Hyderabad by around 12:00PM. Of course, those who wish to stay back and continue birding in the area are welcome to do so at their own convenience. Please note that the areas we will be visiting include farmlands and lake beds, where conditions may be muddy or slushy. We strongly advise wearing gumboots or rubber boots to handle the slush comfortably, or making suitable footwear arrangements as per your preference. Carry adequate water and breakfast/snacks, and protective gear if required.

Non-members are most welcome; however, they are requested to contribute Rs. 100/- per person to the Deccan Birders kitty. New Deccan Birders hats and caps will be available for purchase; please carry adequate cash.

Trip Report: Rudrur, Nizamabad Dt, February 01, 2026

Riyaansh Pandiri

Eurasian Spoonbill (Photo: Gurukumar KR)

While the sun was still sleeping, I woke up to the harsh sound of the alarm. I checked the time and it was 2:30AM, probably the earliest I have ever woken up to go birding. By 3:30AM, we were already on the road. We reached the meeting point, Taj Dhaba, at 3:50AM. The place was packed with unruly crowds. Apparently, Hyderabad has officially resigned from sleeping, just like Delhi.

The other senior birders arrived at 4:00AM. After meet and greet, the group had tea, though not me, and then we started to Rudrur. My brother slept through most of the drive, and at around 7:00AM we reached Rudrur. Even before we reached, we clocked around 20 species at the crack of dawn.

Long-tailed Shrike (Photo: Gurukumar KR)

Indian Pond Heron (Photo: Gurukumar KR)

At Rudrur village, we met Mr Adnan, a local birder and member of DB. We had breakfast together. Here, a local person approached my dad and asked, "Which department are you from, sir?" We all laughed. This happens a lot due to his bearing, I guess. Humayun Sir said this was still better than his experience, as people often ask him which country he is from!

Adaptation and loss

Not all moments were easy. We saw a Black Kite nesting on a big mobile tower, and it got me thinking: should I be sad because its natural habitat, the trees, are lost, or should I be happy that it has adapted so well and is nesting in a communication tower? Guess there is no answer for that one.

The saddest moment, and the most unforgettable, was when we encountered a Greater Spotted Eagle. You would have thought, why sad? You should have been happy. Yes, I was happy until I saw it drop down and disappear in the paddy fields. We all went to check out where it had dropped down. We walked between paddy fields on the small bunds. It was an adventure, till we saw what happened to the eagle. Alas! It was motionless. It had just enough energy to open its beak, and its eyes were going all milky looking. My group sadly said, "I think it's gone."

The locals, curious at the crowd with cameras, came to enquire and told that the bird must have had a drink from the paddy fields where they had recently sprayed some pesticides. Apparently, this was not the first time. Birds, even ones at the top of the food chain, have fallen prey to our indiscriminate use of chemicals, or should I say inadvertent cruelty. Any loss, when repeated, may lose its shock, but never its weight.

The lake unfolds

Thankfully, nature knows how to restore balance too. Our spirits were lifted when we saw Asian Green Bee-eaters joyfully mud bathing, Asian Openbills and Grey Herons moving with grace, and warblers like Clamorous Reed and Sykes's Warblers filling the air with complex calls and sounds.

Asian Green Bee-eater (Photo: Gurukumar KR)

Grey Heron (Photo: Mohd Adnan Uddin)

Plain Prinia (Photo: Mohd Adnan Uddin)

Soon enough, we reached the path which led to the lake. It was all mushy and squishy, the way a paddy field should be, and we all got stuck up to our knees in the mud at least twice. But my brother—he just threw his shoes off and started helping other people who got stuck, stepping into the paddy fields like he was born in them.

But before the lake came an obstacle. It was a wall of thorny shrubs, and we had thorns embedded into our legs and bags. After that, we saw the beautiful lake along with a rare bird which is normally only found in North India, and one of my lifers – the Greylag Goose.

Greylag Goose (Photo: Riyaansh Pandiri)

The geese were probably the biggest birds there, and I think they would weigh 5-10 kg. Grey plumage, pinkish orange bill, and pink legs. Oh! What a sight. I was told to be stealthy, as these were a timid flock, and I tried to be extra calm.

Purple Heron (Photo: Mohd Adnan Uddin)

Wood Sandpiper (Photo: Riyaansh Pandiri)

Then we saw many other waterbirds. Common and Wood Sandpipers, greyish brown and white, caught our interest among the waders. There were also around 300 Little Stints performing an aerial show, basically a resized version of Rosy Starlings performing murmuration.

Little Stint flock (Photo: Mohd Adnan Uddin)

River Tern (Photo: Gurukumar KR)

All the water birds were in great numbers. There were around 250 Green-winged Teals, with their chestnut heads and green patches, which looked lovely through the binoculars; 150 Whistling-ducks; and around 50 Knob-billed Ducks, both of which are now easily identifiable for me. There were also many other ducks, and a Marsh Harrier was also seen.

Knob-billed Duck female (Photo: Gurukumar KR)

Greylag Goose and Northern Shoveler (Photo: Mohd Adnan Uddin)

Wigeon (Photo: Gurukumar KR)

Western Marsh Harrier (Photo: Gurukumar KR)

Then we saw a black patch on the other side of the lake. As we looked through a scope, we saw that it was a congregation of about 600 Cormorants, mixed with a small number of Darters, just drying their wings. Then came the highlight of the day. We saw my favourite bird, the Peregrine Falcon – the fastest bird known to man. It reminded me of how I started birding and how it all basically came back full circle, since one of the first raptors I saw was the Peregrine Falcon.

We waited for a few more hours, and right when we decided to leave, we saw a pair of Greater Spotted Eagles – but this time, they were not lifeless. Thank heavens! They were flying around. With that, we ended our checklists. We waded back, but took a less slushy path later. We said our goodbyes and started back.

Yellow Wagtail (Photo: Riyaansh Pandiri)

Quietly bittersweet

Rudrur gave us a Sunday full of happy moments and sad thoughts together. We saw many beautiful birds, but we also saw things that made us think deeply. The drive back felt long because our minds were full of memories. Some trips end when you reach home, but this one stayed with us.

This trip with Deccan Birders felt more like a family outing, and man did I love it! It's not like the Hyderabad Bird Atlas (HBA), where we are bound by rules and time. Although HBA is knowledge-giving and fun, it's tiring too. With DB, it's just knowledge everywhere, emanating from all the experienced birders, and I am surrounded by this floating cloud of knowledge – snippets, anecdotes, and experiences, funny and otherwise.

Thank you, Sathwik Uncle, Gowthama Uncle, Guru Uncle, Humayun Sir and Adnan Sir, for all the info, and all others, including my parents and brother, for making my day wonderful.

A view of Rudrur lake (Photo: Riyaansh Pandiri)

The list of birds seen during the trip:

Sl No	Species Name	Scientific Name	Sl No	Species Name	Scientific Name
1	Lesser Whistling-duck	*Dendrocygna javanica*	43	Red-naped Ibis	*Pseudibis papillosa*
2	Greylag Goose	*Anser anser*	44	Eurasian Spoonbill	*Platalea leucorodia*
3	Knob-billed Duck	*Sarkidiornis melanotos*	45	Little Egret	*Egretta garzetta*
4	Cotton Pygmy-goose	*Nettapus coromandelianus*	46	Indian Pond Heron	*Ardeola grayii*
5	Garganey	*Spatula querquedula*	47	Eastern Cattle Egret	*Ardea coromanda*
6	Northern Shoveler	*Spatula clypeata*	48	Great Egret	*Ardea alba*
7	Gadwall	*Mareca strepera*	49	Medium Egret	*Ardea intermedia*
8	Eurasian Wigeon	*Mareca penelope*	50	Grey Heron	*Ardea cinerea*
9	Indian Spot-billed Duck	*Anas poecilorhyncha*	51	Purple Heron	*Ardea purpurea*
10	Northern Pintail	*Anas acuta*	52	Spot-billed Pelican	*Pelecanus philippensis*
11	Green-winged Teal	*Anas crecca*	53	Greater Spotted Eagle	*Clanga clanga*
12	Rock Pigeon (Feral Pigeon)	*Columba livia*	54	Western Marsh Harrier	*Circus aeruginosus*
13	Eurasian Collared Dove	*Streptopelia decaocto*	55	Black Kite	*Milvus migrans*
14	Red Collared Dove	*Streptopelia tranquebarica*	56	Brahminy Kite	*Haliastur indus*
15	Greater Coucal	*Centropus sinensis*	57	Asian Green Bee-eater	*Merops orientalis*
16	Asian Palm Swift	*Cypsiurus balasiensis*	58	Common Kingfisher	*Small Blue Kingfisher*
17	Eurasian Coot	*Fulica atra*	59	White-throated Kingfisher	*Halcyon smyrnensis*
18	Grey-headed Swamphen	*Porphyrio poliocephalus*	60	Indian Roller	*Coracias benghalensis*
19	Black-winged Stilt	*Himantopus himantopus*	61	Peregrine Falcon	*Falco peregrinus*
20	Little Ringed Plover	*Thinornis dubius*	62	Rose-ringed Parakeet	*Psittacula krameri*
21	Red-wattled Lapwing	*Vanellus indicus*	63	Black Drongo	*Dicrurus macrocercus*
22	Kentish Plover	*Anarhynchus alexandrinus*	64	Long-tailed Shrike	*Lanius schach*
23	Black-tailed Godwit	*Limosa limosa*	65	Indian Bushlark	*Plocealauda erythroptera*
24	Common Snipe	*Gallinago gallinago*	66	Oriental Skylark	*Alauda gulgula*
25	Wood Sandpiper	*Tringa glareola*	67	Ashy Prinia	*Prinia socialis*
26	Temminck's Stint	*Calidris temminckii*	68	Plain Prinia	*Prinia inornata*
27	Little Stint	*Calidris minuta*	69	Zitting Cisticola	*Cisticola juncidis*
28	Small Pratincole	*Glareola lactea*	70	Blyth's Reed Warbler	*Acrocephalus dumetorum*
29	Collared Pratincole	*Glareola pratincola*	71	Clamorous Reed Warbler	*Acrocephalus stentoreus*
30	Little Tern	*Sternula albifrons*	72	Barn Swallow	*Hirundo rustica*
31	Whiskered Tern	*Chlidonias hybrida*	73	Red-vented Bulbul	*Pycnonotus cafer*
32	River Tern	*Sterna aurantia*	74	Rosy Starling	*Pastor roseus*
33	Little Grebe	*Tachybaptus ruficollis*	75	Indian Pied Starling	*Gracupica contra*
34	Asian Openbill	*Anastomus oscitans*	76	Common Myna	*Acridotheres tristis*
35	Asian Woolly-necked Stork	*Ciconia episcopus*	77	Pied Bushchat	*Saxicola caprata*
36	Painted Stork	*Mycteria leucocephala*	78	Purple Sunbird	*Cinnyris asiaticus*
37	Oriental Darter	*Anhinga melanogaster*	79	Indian Silverbill	*Euodice malabarica*
38	Little Cormorant	*Microcarbo niger*	80	Grey Wagtail	*Motacilla cinerea*
39	Great Cormorant	*Phalacrocorax carbo*	81	Western Yellow Wagtail	*Motacilla flava*
40	Little / Indian Cormorant	*Microcarbo niger* / *Phalacrocorax fuscicollis*	82	Citrine Wagtail	*Motacilla citreola*
41	Glossy Ibis	*Plegadis falcinellus*	83	Paddyfield Pipit	*Anthus rufulus*
42	Black-headed Ibis	*Threskiornis melanocephalus*	84	Tree Pipit	*Anthus trivialis*

Some other photos taken during the trip:

Zitting Cisticola (Photo: Gurukumar KR)

Little Stint (Photo: Gurukumar KR)

Great Egret
(Photo: Mohd Adnan Uddin)

Black-winged Stilts mating
(Photo: Mohd Adnan Uddin)

Painted Stork
(Photo: Mohd Adnan Uddin)

Northern Shoveler male (Photo: Gurukumar KR)

Paddyfield Pipit (Photo: Gurukumar KR)

Red-wattled Lapwing (Photo: Gurukumar KR)

Whiskered Tern (Photo: Gurukumar KR)

Little Stint group (Photo: Gurukumar KR)

Little Egret (Photo: Gurukumar KR)

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MIST, MUNIAS AND MINIVETS
Trip Report: Maredumilli, October 24-27, 2025

K Sudhir Moorti

A view of a forest at Maredumilli (Photo: David Johnson)

Gokul, Gaurav, David, and I set off for Marredumilli – the evergreen paradise for any birder. At the last minute, we decided to take a detour through Jangareddygudem for a morning session at the Gubbala Mangamma Temple. Located deep within dense forests on the border of Andhra Pradesh and Telangana, the temple surroundings offered a perfect starting point. We reached Jangareddygudem in the middle of the night after a 6-hour drive from Hyderabad and caught a couple of hours of shut-eye.

The Detour: Gubbala Mangamma Temple

We arrived at 6:30AM after a bumpy one and a half hour ride, only to be immediately greeted by a Crested Goshawk soaring overhead. Bypassing the temple, we followed a trail along a stream, trekking 5km deep into the forest over three and a half hours.

Orange Minivet (Photo: Gaurav Maheshwari)

It was a spectacular session; we sighted over 50 species, including the Orange Minivet, Chestnut-headed Bee-eater, Rufous Woodpecker, and the Blue-throated Flycatcher.

The track went further but was submerged at a point, probably due to the recent rains, so we decided to head back. After a hearty lunch at a roadside shack, we pushed on to Marredumilli, arriving at 6:00PM. We checked in to our accommodation and turned in early, eager for the next day's adventure.

Marredumilli

A tip regarding a rare species prompted us to change our plans and head to the Gudisa Grasslands. We set off at 4:30AM, arriving by 6:30AM. The air was thick with tension and excitement; each of us silently wondered if we would actually find our target.

Scaly-breasted Munia (Photo: Gokul Krishna Addanki)

As we ascended the hill, we spotted some movement in the grass, and stopped to find a flock of Scaly-breasted Munias. We waited, scanning the vast golden landscape. Ten minutes later, we spotted a few small birds roughly 200 yards away. We tracked them through our binoculars for several intense seconds before the realization hit: Green Avadavats! Gokul's hunch to wait at that spot had paid off.

Green Avadavat (Photo: K Sudhir Moorti)

The joy was overwhelming – high-fives all around! It was a 'lifer' for every member of the group. After thirty minutes of patient waiting, the small flock of four or five birds moved closer to the roadside to feed on grass seeds. We approached cautiously, capturing photographs of these rare beauties in their natural habitat.

Green Avadavat (*Amandava formosa*)
The Green Avadavat is a stunning, small (approx. 10 cm) bird, characterized by its olive-green plumage, distinct zebra-striped flanks, and a bright red beak.

- Diet: As granivores, they forage primarily on the ground for ripening seeds from native grasses like *Themeda* (Kangaroo Grass) and *Heteropogon* (Spear Grass), which dominate the high-altitude grasslands of the Eastern Ghats.
- Conservation Status: Endemic to India, the Green Avadavat has a historical presence in the northern Andhra Pradesh and southern Odisha border regions. While they were once common in scrub jungles, their populations have plummeted due to habitat loss and illegal trapping for the pet trade. Recent sightings in areas like Koraput and now Gudisa are vital records for the conservation of this vulnerable species.

The Coffee Plantations and the Elusive Trogon
After a sumptuous breakfast in a small hamlet, we made our way back to our base at the Vana Vihari Eco-tourism Camp in Marredumilli. Having birded here since 2012, I've always found this region fascinating – it is a unique crossroads where one can find species typically associated with both the Western Ghats and the North-east.

Post-lunch, we headed toward the nearby coffee plantations, a reliable hotspot from previous trips. The activity was nothing short of frenetic. In just two hours, we recorded 40 species, including highlights like the Brown-cheeked Fulvetta, Speckled Piculet, and the Grey-headed Canary-flycatcher.

Grey-headed Canary Flycatcher
(Photo: K Sudhir Moorti)

We also saw both Velvet-fronted and Indian Nuthatches, alongside an absolute abundance of Minivets – Scarlet, Rosy, and Orange Minivets were out in such high numbers that it was heartening to see them thriving. We also had close encounter with a Crested Serpent Eagle, sitting on a low branch. In fact there were two or more individuals calling from inside the plantation.

Crested Serpent Eagle with Ashy Drongo
(Photo: K Sudhir Moorti)

The following day was dedicated to the Coffee Plantations, the Jungle Star Camp area, and the Medicinal Plants Park. Our persistence was rewarded with a 65-species day special thanks to David, our spotter-in-chief. David, who wields a pair of binoculars – unlike the rest of us, with our Cameras and long lenses – is great at spotting birds very quickly.

A White-eyed Buzzard sitting on top of a dry tree was a lovely sight; we also saw some more raptors like Oriental Honey-buzzard, Shikra, Crested Goshawk, Crested Serpent Eagle and one fly-by by a magnificent Black Eagle.

While the group was particularly keen on finding the Malabar Trogon, the species remained elusive until just before sunset.

We finally spotted a lone female; though the low light prevented us from getting photographs, it was a 'lifer' for David and Gaurav. David, in particular, was content just to have sighted such a magnificent bird.

Another species that eluded us was the Blue-bearded Bee-eater; although we sighted and heard it a couple of times, personally I had been hoping for a decent shot. Also missing in action were the Sunbirds, Scarlet and Ruby-cheeked, which we usually got on almost every trip earlier.

The Final Morning: A Return to the Grasslands

On October 27th, our final day here, we couldn't resist one last trip to the Gudisa Grasslands in hopes of getting better shots of the Green Avadavat. We were successful in finding the 'Green Beauty' again, though they remained at a similar distance as our first encounter. Our two-hour session yielded 40 species, with the Bar-winged Flycatcher-shrike being a welcome new addition to our trip list.

The Farewell: Sokuleru Vagu

We checked out of Marredumilli and began the long drive back to Hyderabad, but not before one final stop at the Sokuleru Vagu View Point. Even this quick stop was productive, hosting 45 species.

Common Hill Myna (Photo: K Sudhir Moorti)

Vernal Hanging Parrot (Photo: Gokul Krishna Addanki)

We were treated to sightings of the Common Hill Myna, Vernal Hanging Parrot, Rosy Minivets, and various Flowerpeckers, as well as both Coppersmith and Brown-headed Barbets, and a few other birds.

Indian White-eye (Photo: Gokul Krishna Addanki)

Bixa orellana (Photo: K Sudhir Moorti)

We came across a flowering plant that was locally known as the Lipstick Tree or Annatto Tree (*Bixa ocellana*). It also seemed to attract quite a few birds.

Pied Bushchat (Photo: Gokul Krishna Addanki)

It was the perfect conclusion to a wonderful expedition. The wonderfully green forests, rolling hills and amazing birds really awed us. Not to mention the 'Bamboo Biryani Lunches' and the evening Bird List discussion sessions. I loved the way this team came together, with Gokul's patience and perseverance, Gaurav's energy and David's spotting skills. It really made the trip fantastic. We headed home with full memory cards and even fuller hearts.

The full list of birds seen during the trip is given below:

Sl No	Species Name	Scientific Name	Kavadigundla	Gudisa	Coffee Plantation	Pullangi	Sokuleru Vagu View Point
1	Alpine Swift	*Tachymarptis melba*					Y
2	Ashy Drongo	*Dicrurus leucophaeus*	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
3	Ashy Prinia	*Prinia socialis*			Y	Y	
4	Ashy Woodswallow	*Artamus fuscus*		Y	Y		Y
5	Asian Emerald Dove	*Chalcophaps indica*			Y		
6	Asian Green Bee-eater	*Merops orientalis*	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
7	Asian Koel	*Eudynamys scolopaceus*			Y		
8	Asian Palm Swift	*Cypsiurus balasiensis*	Y				Y
9	Asian Tit	*Parus cinereus*			Y	Y	
10	Bar-winged Flycatcher-shrike	*Hemipus picatus*				Y	
11	Black Drongo	*Dicrurus macrocercus*		Y			
12	Black Eagle	*Ictinaetus malaiensis*			Y		
13	Black-hooded Oriole	*Oriolus xanthornus*	Y			Y	
14	Black-naped Monarch	*Hypothymis azurea*	Y		Y		
15	Black-naped Oriole	*Oriolus chinensis*					Y
16	Black-rumped Flameback	*Dinopium benghalense*			Y		
17	Black-winged Kite	*Elanus caeruleus*					Y
18	Blue-bearded Bee-eater	*Nyctyornis athertoni*			Y		
19	Blue-throated Flycatcher	*Cyornis rubeculoides*	Y				
20	Booted Warbler	*Iduna caligata*				Y	
21	Bronzed Drongo	*Dicrurus aeneus*	Y		Y	Y	Y
22	Brown Shrike	*Lanius cristatus*		Y	Y		Y
23	Brown-capped Pygmy Woodpecker	*Yungipicus nanus*	Y		Y		
24	Brown-cheeked Fulvetta	*Alcippe poioicephala*	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
25	Brown-headed Barbet	*Psilopogon zeylanicus*	Y		Y		Y
26	Chestnut-headed Bee-eater	*Merops leschenaulti*	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
27	Common Hill Myna	*Gracula religiosa*					Y
28	Common Iora	*Aegithina tiphia*		Y	Y	Y	Y
29	Common Myna	*Acridotheres tristis*					Y
30	Common Tailorbird	*Orthotomus sutorius*	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
31	Common Woodshrike	*Tephrodornis pondicerianus*	Y	Y			Y
32	Coppersmith Barbet	*Psilopogon haemacephalus*	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
33	Crested Goshawk	*Lophospiza trivirgata*	Y		Y		
34	Crested Goshawk	*Lophospiza trivirgata*			Y		
35	Crested Serpent Eagle	*Spilornis cheela*			Y		
36	Crested Treeswift	*Hemiprocne coronata*	Y	Y	Y		Y
37	Eastern Cattle Egret	*Ardea coromanda*			Y		Y
38	Grey Wagtail	*Motacilla cinerea*	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
39	Grey-breasted Prinia	*Prinia hodgsonii*		Y	Y		
40	Grey-headed Canary Flycatcher	*Culicicapa ceylonensis*	Y	Y	Y		
41	Grey-headed Woodpecker	*Picus canus*			Y		
42	Greater Coucal	*Centropus sinensis*			Y	Y	Y
43	Green Warbler	*Phylloscopus nitidus*	Y	Y		Y	Y
44	Green/Greenish Warbler	*Phylloscopus nitidus/trochiloides*			Y		
45	Green-billed Malkoha	*Phaenicophaeus tristis*			Y		
46	Greenish Warbler	*Phylloscopus trochiloides*	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
47	House Crow	*Corvus splendens*	Y	Y		Y	
48	House Sparrow	*Passer domesticus*	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
49	Indian Cuckooshrike	*Coracina macei*	Y				Y
50	Indian Golden Oriole	*Oriolus kundoo*					Y

Sl No	Species Name	Scientific Name	Kavadigundla	Gudisa	Coffee Plantation	Pullangi	Sokuleru Vagu View Point
51	Indian Nuthatch	*Sitta castanea*	Y	Y	Y	Y	
52	Indian Paradise-flycatcher	*Terpsiphone paradisi*	Y				
53	Indian Scimitar Babbler	*Pomatorhinus horsfieldii*		Y			
54	Indian Swiftlet	*Aerodramus unicolor*		Y			
55	Indian White-eye	*Zosterops palpebrosus*	Y	Y	Y	Y	
56	Indian Yellow Tit	*Machlolophus aplonotus*	Y		Y	Y	
57	Jerdon's Leafbird	*Chloropsis jerdoni*	Y			Y	Y
58	Large-billed Crow	*Corvus macrorhynchos*		Y			Y
59	Lesser Yellownape	*Picus chlorolophus*			Y		
60	Little Swift	*Apus affinis*	Y		Y		Y
61	Malabar Trogon	*Harpactes fasciatus*			Y		Y
62	Mottled Wood Owl	*Strix ocellata*			Y		
63	nightjar sp.	*Caprimulgidae sp.*				Y	
64	old world quail sp.	*Synoicus/Coturnix sp.*		Y			
65	old world warbler sp.	*Passeriformes sp.*			Y		
66	Orange Minivet	*Pericrocotus flammeus*	Y		Y		
67	Oriental Honey-buzzard	*Pernis ptilorhynchus*			Y		
68	Oriental Magpie Robin	*Copsychus saularis*		Y			
69	Painted Spurfowl	*Galloperdix lunulata*			Y		
70	Pale-billed Flowerpecker	*Dicaeum erythrorhynchos*		Y	Y	Y	Y
71	Pied Bushchat	*Saxicola caprata*		Y	Y	Y	
72	Plum-headed Parakeet	*Psittacula cyanocephala*		Y	Y	Y	Y
73	Puff-throated Babbler	*Pellorneum ruficeps*	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
74	Purple Sunbird	*Cinnyris asiaticus*	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
75	Purple-rumped Sunbird	*Leptocoma zeylonica*	Y	Y	Y		Y
76	Red Junglefowl	*Gallus gallus*			Y		
77	Red-whiskered Bulbul	*Pycnonotus jocosus*	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
78	Rosy Minivet	*Pericrocotus roseus*			Y		Y
79	Rufous Treepie	*Dendrocitta vagabunda*			Y		
80	Rufous Woodpecker	*Micropternus brachyurus*	Y				
81	Scaly-breasted Munia	*Lonchura punctulata*	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
82	Scarlet Minivet	*Pericrocotus speciosus*	Y		Y	Y	Y
83	Small Minivet	*Pericrocotus cinnamomeus*					Y
84	Southern Hill Myna	*Gracula indica*	Y				
85	Speckled Piculet	*Picumnus innominatus*			Y		
86	Spot-breasted Fantail	*Rhipidura albogularis*	Y	Y		Y	
87	Spotted Dove	*Spilopelia chinensis*	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
88	Thick-billed Flowerpecker	*Pachyglossa agilis*		Y		Y	Y
89	Tickell's Blue Flycatcher	*Cyornis tickelliae*	Y				
90	Tickell's Leaf Warbler	*Phylloscopus affinis*			Y		
91	Velvet-fronted Nuthatch	*Sitta frontalis*			Y	Y	
92	Verditer Flycatcher	*Eumyias thalassinus*			Y		Y
93	Vernal Hanging Parrot	*Loriculus vernalis*			Y	Y	
94	Western Crowned Warbler	*Phylloscopus occipitalis*			Y		
95	White-bellied Drongo	*Dicrurus caerulescens*		Y	Y		
96	White-browed Bulbul	*Pycnonotus luteolus*					Y
97	White-cheeked Barbet	*Psilopogon viridis*			Y		
98	White-eyed Buzzard	*Butastur teesa*			Y		
99	White-rumped Shama	*Copsychus malabaricus*	Y	Y	Y	Y	
100	White-rumped Spinetail	*Zoonavena sylvatica*			Y		
101	Yellow-crowned Woodpecker	*Leiopicus mahrattensis*	Y		Y		

A Bamboo Biryani stall (Photo: David Johnson)

Trip Summary

- Locations covered: Gubbala Mangamma Temple, Gudisa Grasslands, Marredumilli (Vana Vihari, Jungle Star, Coffee Plantations), and Sokuleru Vagu.
- Total species sighted: >100 unique species.
- Key highlights: Green Avadavat, Malabar Trogon and all the Minivets.

House Sparrow (Photo: Gokul Krishna Addanki)

References

1. Dr. Satya Prakash Mehra (CC BY-NC)
2. Payne, R. B. (2021). Green Avadavat (Amandava formosa), version 1.1. In Birds of the World. Cornell Lab of Ornithology.

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Bird Humour

Umesh Mani

THE ARGYLE SWEATER
WHAT THE–? YOU SAID THESE TREES WERE PERFECT FOR OUR BEAKS!
I SAID THEY WERE 'IMPECKABLE.'
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(Received on WhatsApp, July 05, 2024)

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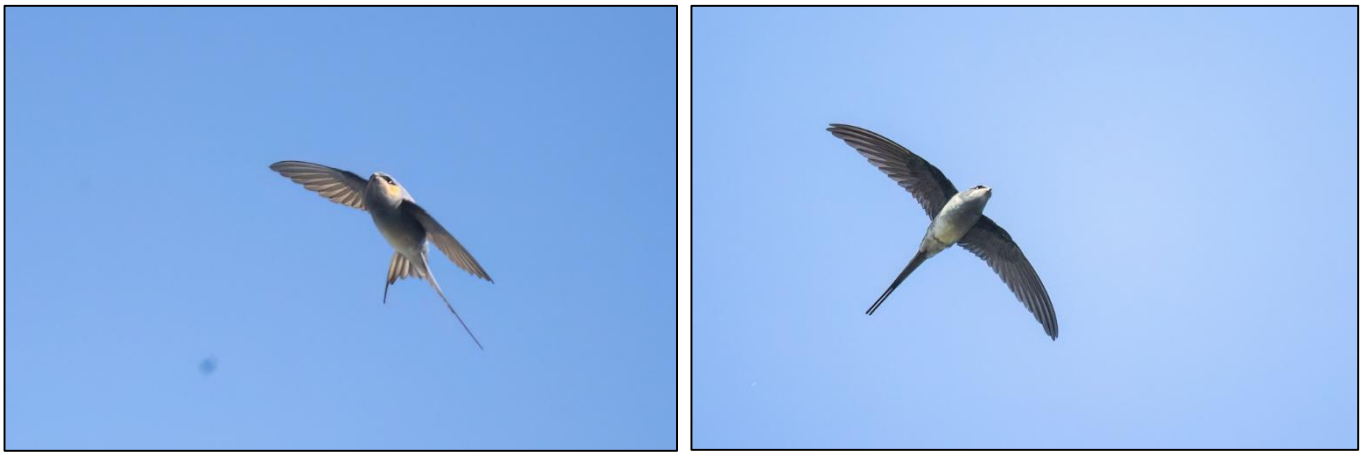
Bird of the Month

Text and Photos: Umesh Mani

Crested Treeswift (*Hemiprocne coranata*)



Crested Treeswift Male (L) and Female (R) (Kotagiri, Tamil Nadu, February 1, 2026)

Order:	Apodiformes
Family:	Hemiprocnidae
Genus:	*Hemiprocne*
Species:	*H. coronata*
Size:	23 cm
IUCN Status:	Least Concern

Description & distribution: The Crested Treeswift is a large, slender swift that is widely distributed across all of India (except for the arid North-western region) as well as Sri Lanka, Nepal, Bhutan, and east into Bangladesh, Myanmar, Thailand, Cambodia, Vietnam, Laos and parts of China, usually below an altitude of 1000m.

It is blue-grey above and paler and whitish below, with a prominent erectile crest, long pointed wings, and deeply forked tail. The chin and throat are chestnut in the male and grey in the female.

Habitat & behaviour: The Crested Treeswift is a resident breeder across most of its range, and prefers open woodland or deciduous forest areas; it is also sometimes seen in open areas near trees, and in parks and gardens. It is easily recognized even in flight by its appearance – very similar to the Asian Palm Swift, but larger and with a more deeply forked tail. It is typically seen in pairs or small groups while hawking for midges or tiny winged insects. While perching, it tends to sit upright on bare branches, with its long wings crossed on either side of the spiky tail feathers. The calls include a variety of loud and harsh notes which may be uttered either while perching or in flight; the most common is a *whit-uck, whit-uck, whit-uck.*

Nesting: The Crested Treeswift breeds mainly between December and July, with some local variations or extensions. The nest is usually a very small, shallow and flimsy-looking saucer made of bark scraps and feathers, stuck together with saliva, and attached to the upper surface of a bare branch, usually between 4m to 15m above ground. The usual clutch consists of just one egg, pale grey, elliptical, and almost filling the nest.

Local name: The Crested Treeswift is known as *'Tajdar ababeel'* in Hindi, *'Chotaliyo ababeelo'* in Gujarati, *'Sarappakshi'* in Malayalam and *'Wehi lihiniya'* in Sinhala.

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